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Letter dated 8 June 2012 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), I have the honour to transmit the attached letter, dated 5 June 2012, from the Deputy Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Mr. Alexander Vershbow, transmitting the report on the international security presence in Kosovo, covering the period from 1 January to 31 March 2012 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter and its annex to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) BAN Ki-moon

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Annex

In accordance with paragraph 20 of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), I attach a report on the operations of the Kosovo Force covering the period from 1 January to 31 March 2012 (see enclosure).

I would appreciate you making this report available to the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Alexander **Vershbow**

Enclosure

Report to the United Nations on the operations of the Kosovo Force

Introduction

1. The present report on the Kosovo Force (KFOR) is provided in accordance with United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) and covers the period from 1 January to 31 March 2012.

2. As at 31 March 2012, the total number of KFOR troops in theatre was 5,800. This includes the Operational Reserve Force battalion, which deployed in theatre in the aftermath of the July 2011 events in the northern part of Kosovo.

Security situation and operations

3. The overall security situation in theatre by the end of the reporting period remained calm but volatile in the northern part of Kosovo.

4. During the reporting period, KFOR continued to contribute to both the provision of a safe and secure environment and the full restoration of freedom of movement for all people in Kosovo. It continued to effectively use situational awareness to deploy manoeuvre forces and reserves to rapidly deter violence and manage crisis situations. While joint KFOR and EULEX logistic convoys driving towards crossing points Gate 1 and DOG 31 have generally been successful, only convoys of the European Union Rule of Law Mission (EULEX) continue to be sporadically blocked in the northern part of Kosovo.

5. On 4 January 2012, the North Atlantic Council approved the request of the Allied Command Operations of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to unfix the Dević Monastery. On 2 February 2012, KFOR confirmed that the unfixing process would follow a phased approach. The so-called shaping phase was successfully completed by 5 March 2012. No incidents were reported during that period.

6. On 10 January 2012, in Skopje, the KFOR Commander conducted a high-level meeting of the Joint Implementation Commission with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia[1] Minister of the Interior and General Army Staff, which included an office call with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Ministry of Defence. On 24 January 2012, additional high-level Joint Implementation Commission meetings were held between the KFOR Commander and the authorities of Montenegro, in Podgorica. On 23 January 2012, the new Commander of Allied Joint Forces Command Naples, Admiral Bruce Clingan, met with the new Serbian Chief of Staff, Lieutenant General Ljubisa Diković, and other senior officials, in Belgrade. On 2 March 2012, the KFOR Commander convened a high-level meeting of the Joint Implementation Commission with the Serbian Chief of Staff to discuss the security situation in the northern part of Kosovo.

7. The NATO Operational Reserve Force battalion provided by Austria and Germany since 9 August 2011 continued to be deployed in theatre during the

[1] Turkey recognizes the Republic of Macedonia by its constitutional name.

reporting period. On 26 January 2012, Italy offered to replace the deployed battalion at the time of the official handover starting on 24 March 2012. The Italian Operational Reserve Force battalion attained full operational capability on 31 March 2012.

8. On 7 March 2012, the Supreme Allied Commander Europe visited KFOR to receive a comprehensive briefing from the KFOR Commander on developments in theatre since his previous visit in December 2011.

New North Atlantic Treaty Organization tasks

9. On 16 January 2012, the Kosovo Security Force (KSF) Contracts Extension Board completed the processing of 1,382 applications by former Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC) members for contract extensions with KSF. Following medical, physical fitness and personal performance assessments, decisions on contract extensions were made and the contracts of 1,315 members of a total 1,382 applicants were renewed.

10. In early February 2012, members of KSF provided assistance to local authorities to safely transport students stranded at a ski area east of Prizren owing to a severe snow avalanche in the area. The rescue operation was swift and successful, and is considered a good indicator of the level of development that KSF has attained in the core capability of search and rescue. The following week, KSF successfully followed up with assistance to KFOR mountain specialists and local authorities in subsequent search and rescue operations in the same area, which lasted a number of days.

11. The second recruitment campaign for the KSF Reserve Component was conducted between 20 February and 23 March 2012. A total of 435 applications were processed, including of 21 females (all Kosovo Albanian). Applications from minority communities totalled 13, including 3 of Kosovo Serbs. KSF intends to fill from 250 to 350 positions during this recruitment campaign. There are currently 149 KSF reservists, which is well below their target strength of 800 members.

12. During the reporting period, KSF members attended a number of courses, in accordance with the 2012 annual training plan. The courses were well prepared, instructors presented good professional skills, and attendees participated actively and demonstrated a professional attitude.

Summary

13. During the reporting period, KFOR, in coordination with EULEX and the Kosovo Police, continued to work towards guaranteeing a safe and secure environment and freedom of movement for all citizens in Kosovo. The situation in the northern part of Kosovo remained volatile, and several roadblocks continued to hamper the freedom of movement of the local population, KFOR and EULEX. However, by the end of the reporting period, freedom of movement had improved considerably overall, compared to the previous months. The unauthorized bypasses at the administrative boundary line and smuggling activities remained problems during the reporting period, and KFOR continued to closely monitor the security situation on the ground and maintain its deterrent posture to react quickly and decisively, as required.